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# ALBERTA LIBRARY BOARD SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT 1983/84

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# ALBERTA LIBRARY BOARD

# SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT
## 1983/84

Alberta
CULTURE

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ALBERTA LIBRARY BOARD
GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA

ALBERTA CULTURE
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1984

COVER PHOTO: *St. Albert Place housing the Public Library*

# ALBERTA LIBRARY BOARD

Honourable Mary J. LeMessurier
Minister of Culture
131 Legislature Building
EDMONTON, AB
T5K 2B6

Dear Madam Minister:

In accordance with the Libraries Act, I have the honour to present to you the Sixth Annual Report of the Alberta Library Board for the year ending March 31, 1984.

As I complete my term as a member and chairperson of the Board I would like to thank you for a most rewarding opportunity to participate in the development of library and information services in the Province of Alberta.

Sincerely,

W. G. Schieman

William Schieman
Chairperson
Alberta Library Board
1983/84

16214 - 114 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5M 2Z5

# Introduction

The Alberta Library Board, established six years ago, is an Advisory Board to the Minister of Culture. Its purpose is to advise the Minister with regard to matters relating to the expansion, development, co-ordination and encouragement of libraries and library services in Alberta.

Under the Libraries Act, Chapter L-12.1, 1983 of the Statutes of Alberta, the Board may, with the approval of the Minister, carry out surveys, encourage community activities, call public meetings, promote publicity campaigns, carry on its activities in co-operation with or through an established organization or agency and generally do any act or thing having for its purpose the promotion of library services in Alberta.

# Board Membership

During the 1983-84 year the members of the board were: Mrs. Daphne Betlamini, Grande Prairie, Mrs. Elaine Blakey, Red Deer, Dr. Merron Chorny, Calgary, Dr. Christopher Gordon-Craig, Edmonton, Mr. Ed Halina, Olds, Mrs. Jean Lewis, High Prairie, and Mr. William Schieman, Medicine Hat. Mr. Schieman was elected chairperson and Mrs. Blakey vice-chairperson for one-year terms.

Mr. Ron Hodges retired from the Board after five years of service. He will be remembered for his fine work as a member of the ad hoc committee on legislation — developing principles now embodied in the new Libraries Act. He also worked on the Scholarship/Bursary Committees, acted as liaison with the Edmonton Public Library and was chairperson of the Board in 1982-83.

New board member Ed Halina joined the Board with experience as current chairman of the Parkland Regional Library Board and past-president of the Alberta Library Trustees Association.

# Library Legislation

The highlight of the year was the preparation of the new Libraries Act and Regulations and securing agreement in the library community for these initiatives. The members of the Alberta Library Board, Library Services Branch staff and key members of the library community were all involved in the final stages of drafting the legislation. The Libraries Act was passed by the Legislature on November 30, 1983 and comes into force on April 1, 1984.

During the intervening period new grant regulations were drawn up and passed. The library grants regulations now parallel other cultural grants more closely and broaden the scope of resource sharing grants.

The new Act clearly sets out the roles of the various partners in library development, and, in particular clarifies the relationship between municipal library boards and the councils which appoint them. The Act also emphasizes the mandate of library boards to provide a comprehensive and efficient service and prohibits any charges for borrowing any type of library material or obtaining information.

The Libraries Regulation, still in draft form, will provide a framework for planning within which boards can assess the needs of their communities, set goals to meet these needs and develop policies and plans for action. The Act and Regulation have gone further in this direction than any other Canadian library legislation. The reaction of the Alberta library community to the thrust of the legislation has been generally very positive.

# Libraries 2000

One of the Alberta Library Board's major undertakings during the year was the sponsorship and planning of Libraries 2000, held at Red Deer, October 5-8, 1983. Supported by the Minister of Culture, this invitational seminar explored the future development of libraries in Alberta in relation to their past growth, their present state and their social purpose. The seminar planning committee consisted of the following:

M. Chorny, Alberta Library Board (Chairperson)

J. Dutton, Director, Calgary Public Library

J. Forsyth, Director, Alberta Culture Library Services

L. MacRae, Director, Media Services, Calgary Board of Education

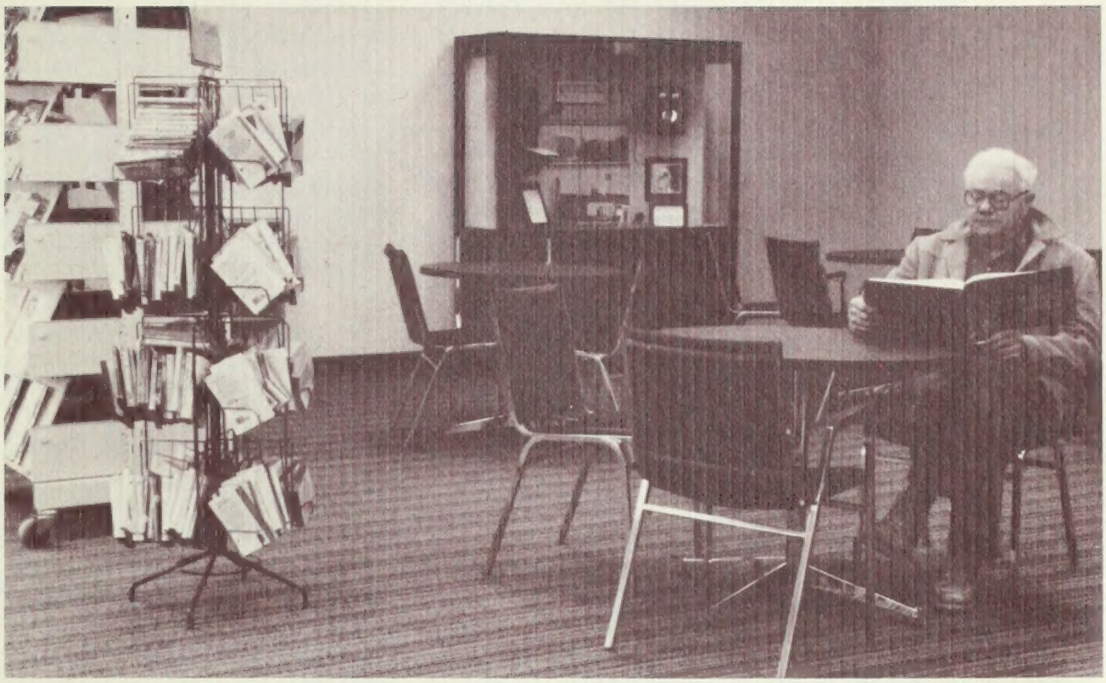
H. Platt, President, Alberta Library Trustees Association

Sixty-five persons participated in the seminar. They represented public, school, post-secondary, government and private libraries; town, city and regional library trustees; three government departments; and the Alberta Library Board.

Participants were involved in considering and responding to previously prepared major position papers. They engaged in plenary and group sessions and their deliberations culminated in a series of group reports.

The proceedings of the seminar were subsequently published and wide provincial distribution of the publication will be undertaken. It is expected that this report will lead to further discussion and consideration of the issues raised at the Red Deer seminar. The Alberta Library Board appointed an ad hoc committee consisting of Mrs. Blakey and Mr. Halina to assist such discussion, to receive responses and to plan further related activities. Several follow-up area meetings have been held in the Peace Area and central Alberta.

Morinville Municipal Centennial Library



Strathmore Municipal Library

# Co-operative Library Systems

The board continued to monitor the growth and expansion of the province's three existing library systems — Parkland, Yellowhead and Marigold and followed the progress of the four library development projects by attending meetings and reviewing system and project newsletters.

The board initiated special meetings with the Parkland, Yellowhead and Red Deer library boards to review the discussion paper entitled "The Cost Implications of the Expansion of the Parkland and Yellowhead Regional Libraries"; and with the Marigold Library System board to discuss that body's budget and service needs. Meetings were held with the staff of the University of Alberta Faculty of Extension and Library to discuss that service and its future. Data is being collected with regard to the services and clientele of the Extension Library particularly within library systems.

Elsewhere in the province, development projects continued working towards the possibility of systems establishment.

The Peace Region Co-operative Library Project, with a nine member volunteer steering committee, established its goals and objectives and presented them to 38 library boards. A communications plan was approved and letters of support were obtained from more than 75% of the area boards. In June 1983, the Minister's announcement of major project funding solidified provincial and local support. The steering committee, with full consultative support from the Library Services Branch, and regular attendance at meetings by Board members Mrs. Betlamini and Mrs. Lewis, concentrated on creating an informed, on-going dialogue with library boards, staff, officials and organizations, helping them to identify their own concerns and to clarify their role in and the benefits of a co-operative library system.

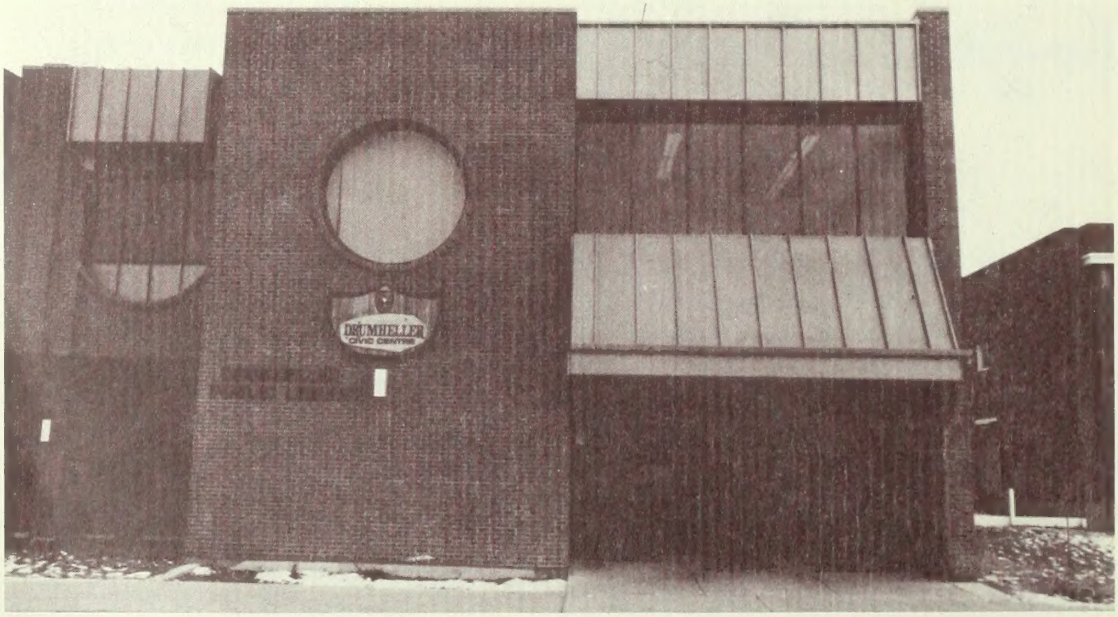
During the 1983-84 year the Shortgrass Library Project steering committee restructured itself and held a series of area meetings to examine the benefits of a system. A survey to determine which system services the boards preferred was conducted. Letters of support were obtained from many library boards including Medicine Hat and two municipal councils representing a total of 89% of the area population. In light of this support the committee successfully applied for a $5,000 grant from the Library Services Branch to aid in the preliminary drafting of a plan of service and to provide an on-going education program. Mr. Schieman remained in close contact with the activities of the committee and attended their meetings.

In the past year the Northern Lights Library Project in northeast Alberta concentrated on the development of library programs and

author tours; the establishment of a training and development program for librarians and trustees; the provision of consulting services to libraries within the Bonnyville M.D. and the publication of a project newsletter entitled the "Aurora". The project also sponsored four area-wide meetings on systems development and was instrumental in the formation of the Northeast Alberta Library Trustees Association.

By special permission of the Minister, the Oldman Library Project continued its operations until October 31, 1983. Unfortunately, no additional councils could be persuaded to commit themselves and the local committee agreed to discontinue its efforts. An evaluation was conducted by the Library Services Branch and the ensuing report included ten recommendations which are proving useful in guiding other steering committees.

Throughout the province development continued to take place at the local level. The Board was pleased to see new municipal library boards established in the counties of St. Paul and Grande Prairie as well as in the villages of Coutts and Edberg. Two new municipalities joined the Marigold Library System. The Board recommended approval for the establishment of the Savanna Community Library in Silver Valley. Silver Valley is located northwest of Fairview in Improvement District #21. Prior to the establishment of the Savanna Community Library, library service was not provided by either a municipal or regional library system. The library facility is located in the Savanna Rec-Plex which serves an area population of 1,200. The new board has been active in conducting a community survey and sponsoring fund raising events and has passed a motion in favour of the work of the Peace Library Project. Finally, twenty libraries completed new facilities or major renovations and the Board was pleased to be able to attend four official openings.




Drumheller Public Library

# Extension Library

The Board actively investigated the future role of the University of Alberta Extension Library. A committee met with representatives from the Extension Library and the Faculty of Extension and discussed how the Library's service could be most effectively used in a network of regional library systems.

The Board committee then convened a meeting of the Extension Library and the three existing library systems. During that meeting it was realized that more data about the population being served was needed. The Extension Library agreed to survey its users in order to establish where they live in relation to the nearest public library and to identify the sources of all their reading. When all the data has been collected and tabulated the Board will be able to discuss and offer recommendations on services which the Extension Library could offer to complement and assist in regional library development.

# Resource Sharing

As resource sharing among Alberta's libraries continued to grow, a Board committee convened a meeting with the Extension Library of the University of Alberta to discuss its service in the future.

Interlibrary loan requests in 1982 totalled 20,298, a 14 per cent increase over the previous year. Alberta's libraries filled 71.3 per cent of these requests.

# Services to the Handicapped

As a result of research undertaken in 1982 the criteria which defines who can use talking books was rewritten and more clearly articulated. A new circulation quota system for talking books has meant that libraries now receive collections based on the number of patrons in the community. This has increased the number of titles available at any one time.

Service thus continued to grow. Talking books were supplied to all three library systems and 90 individual libraries. Two thousand, eight hundred and fifteen Albertans used talking books, an increase of 17 per cent. Total circulation increased 17 per cent to 39,047.

Okotoks Public Library

# Multilingual Biblioservice

Research commissioned on the reading needs of Francophone Albertans resulted in recommendations that will be relevant to many ethno-cultural groups.

Twenty-one thousand, six hundred and sixty-two volumes in 30 languages were circulated, an increase of 21 per cent. One thousand, five hundred and twenty-five volumes were obtained from the National Library and 4,870 volumes were purchased or donated. The collection at the end of 1983 consisted of 40,541 volumes, a growth of 19 per cent. Of these, 28,191 were available for circulation and 4,743 records were added to the automated data base, bringing the total records to 16,738.

# Library Funding

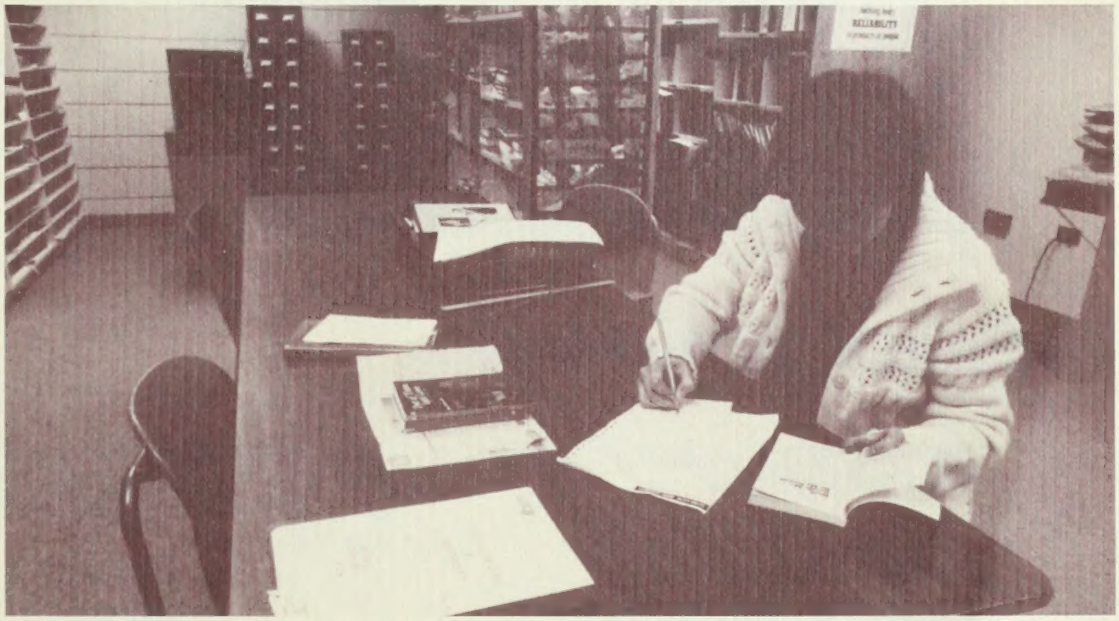
In the area of financial assistance, provincial government grants to libraries and related organizations totalled almost $10 million. A sub-committee of the board was struck to review Major Cultural/Recreational Development Program funding and recommended continued specified support for library and cultural development to the Minister. The Board also wrote to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs commending her decision to grant more lottery funds to cultural organizations, and for establishing a Literary Arts Foundation to include libraries.

The Board also made representation to the Minister of Culture stating its opposition to the possibility of grants to library boards becoming part of larger unconditional grants to municipalities. The Minister of Culture has officially recommended to the Minister of Municipal Affairs that no changes be made in the way in which financial assistance is currently awarded to public libraries. Finally, the board reviewed a proposal for capital grants to library systems for presentation to the Minister in the coming year.

Canmore Public Library

# School Libraries

Early in the year, Alberta Education released an eagerly awaited report entitled "A Position Paper on School Libraries in Alberta". Board members submitted a response after attending seminars and reviewing the paper carefully. The Board looks forward to the final document entitled "Proposed Policy, Guidelines, Procedures and Standards for School Libraries in Alberta" which is due for release in the new year and promises to provide leadership and direction for our province's school libraries. It is also anticipated that the document will assist in promoting fuller co-operation between school and public libraries.



Camrose Public Library

# Scholarships and Awards

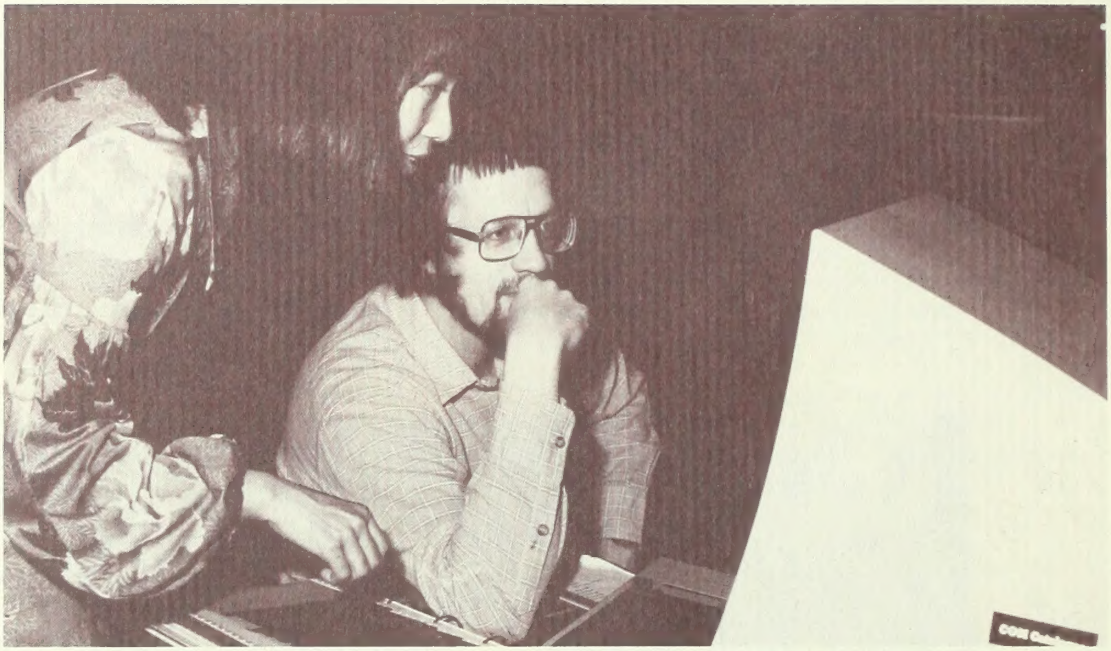
The Alberta Library Bursary, given to a student of Library Science, was awarded to Ms. Mary Yvonne Slemko of Onoway, Alberta. A committee of the Alberta Library Board consisting of Mrs. Lewis and Mrs. Blakey selected Ms. Slemko from thirteen applicants. Ms. Slemko had been a teacher for fourteen years and commenced her first year in the Master of Library Science Programme at the University of Alberta in September of 1983.

For the second consecutive year no research fellowship was awarded.

# Liaison With Other Groups

The Board held eleven regular monthly meetings plus numerous sub-committee meetings. In addition, board representatives met with the chairpersons and vice-chairpersons of the Library Association of Alberta and the Alberta Library Trustees Association for the purpose of discussing areas of mutual concern.

The Board also met with all the units of the Library Services Branch in order to become more familiar with their work. Finally, the Board had representation at many steering committee meetings and workshops, and the Alberta Library Trustees Association area workshops.



Edmonton Public Library

# Conferences and Workshops

Representatives of the board attended the following conferences:

The Canadian Library Association Conference (Winnipeg)

The American Library Association Conference (Los Angeles)

Libraries 2000 (Red Deer)

The Pacific Northwest Library Association Conference (Sun Valley, Idaho)

The ALTA/LAA Conference (Jasper)

The Public Librarians and New Librarians Workshop (Edmonton)

Other gatherings included the attendance at or sending greetings to the following libraries on the occasion of their official opening:

Berwyn

Thorhild

Ponoka

Rocky Mountain House

Hythe

Hinton

Extension Library, University of Alberta

Milo

During the period covered by this report, library development activities have been affected by the economic conditions prevalent in Canada and Alberta. The government had to suspend indexation of grants and, in common with all departments of government, the budget of the Library Services Branch was frozen. Both the Board and the Branch continued to draft plans for the future development of library services confident that economic conditions will improve.

The board wishes to acknowledge the confidence, assistance and encouragement it has continued to receive from the Minister, the Honourable Mary J. LeMessurier. Mr. Joe Forsyth, director of the Library Services Branch and his capable staff have continued to provide an excellent source of assistance and detailed research to the board.

The Board is confident that the new Libraries Act and Regulation will stimulate and facilitate future library development at the provincial, regional system and local level.